

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 946

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, DM, GB

SUBJ: BENINESE REACTION TO GABONESE ATTACK ON EXPATRIATE
COMMUNITY

REF: L'VILLE 2022

1. THE BENINESE MILITARY REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TUESDAY THE EXPECTED ARRIVAL OF MORE THAN 10,000 BENINESE BEING FORCIBLY REPATRIATED FROM GABON, AND CALLED UPON THE NATION TO GIVE THEM A WARM AND GENEROUS RECEPTION. IN A STATEMENT PUBLISHED IN THE SEMI-OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER, EHUZU, THE GOV'T LASHED OUT AT GABONESE PRESIDENT BONGO, ACCUSING HIM OF BEING AN "AFRICAN LACKEY OF INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM". THE COMMUNIQUE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE EXPULSION DID NOT REFLECT THE "PROFOUND ASPIRATIONS OF THE BROTHER PEOPLE OF GABON", BUT ONLY THE GABONESE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REACTIONS TO THE VICTORIES WON BY THE BENINESE PEOPLE AT THE OAU SUMMIT IN EXPOSING THE ORGANIZERS OF THE INVASION OF BENIN.

2. IN COTONOU, RUMORS ARE WIDESPREAD OF HEAVY ATTACKS AGAINST THE BENINESE IN GABON. THE GOV'T HAS ESTABLISHED A COMMITTEE TO SUPERVISE THEIR REPATRIATION AND HAS CALLED UPON ALL CITIZENS
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TO FACILITATE THEIR REINTEGRATION INTO SOCIETY. HOWEVER, IF 10,000 PROVES TO BE A CORRECT FIGURE FOR THE NUMBER OF EXPATRIATES, THEIR ARRIVAL WILL CERTAINLY PLACE A HEAVY STRAIN ON BENIN'S MEAGER FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

3. IN THE MEANTIME, THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO TREAT KEREKOU'S OAU SPEECH AS A MAJOR DIPLOMATIC VICTORY. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS,

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT PRES. KEREKOU HAD BEEN ABLE TO PRESENT
THE FULL STORY OF THE INVASION TO THE OTHER AFRICAN CHIEFS OF
STATE. PARKILL

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